

MACAULAY'S CHARACTER OF WILLIAM III

357

The news startled the Whigs. Some of their leaders sent letters of protest to the King, and they meant to promote an address in the Commons against his proposed journey to Ireland.¹ He had no intention of yielding to this clamour. On January 10-20, he wrote to Portland : ' I find that people begin to be very anxious about my journey to Ireland, particularly the Whigs, who fear to lose me too soon before they have done with me all they wish ; for as for their friendship you know what that is worth in this country/²

William discussed the question with Halifax. He told him (January 6) ' he must go into Ireland, and that nothing would stirre here, except hee had ill succeſſe there/ The fact that Parliament diſapproved was of little weight with William, though ' he was apprehenſive they would make addreſſes againſt it/ ³ He fruſtrated parliamentary oppoſition by a prorogation. The poſition on the Continent gave him more anxiety. He realiſed that the Allies would diſlike his going into Ireland. He was badly needed in Holland,, where the magiſtrates of Amſterdam had raised difficulties which he had ſent Portland to ſettle but could have better ſettled himſelf. A congreſs of the allied powers was about to meet at The Hague, and William's preſence might be vital to the outcome. ' I tremble about the voyage

of Your Majesty to Ireland/ wrote Waldeck; '
for many
reasons a journey here for a fortnight would
do the public
more good than a voyage thither/ *

William was eager to go to Holland but knew
it was im-
possible. If it were possible without wishing to
abandon
everything here he would embark tomorrow,
he wrote to

¹ Klopp, v. 88.

² Correspondentie, ed. Japikse, i. 69-70 ; Macaulay, IV,
1791 (xv).

³ Halifax, ii. 244-5.

⁴ Miiller, ii. 207.